



CITY OF LODI

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA TITLE: Kettleman Lane (State Highway 12) at Lee Avenue, "Do Not Block Intersection" Signing Study

MEETING DATE: February 2, 1994

PREPARED BY: Public Works Director

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That the City Council review the following information regarding the installation of "Do Not Block Intersection" signing on Kettleman Lane (State Highway 12) at Lee Avenue and take no action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: At its December 15, 1993 meeting, City Council directed staff to review the installation of "Do Not Block Intersection" signing/markings on Kettleman Lane at Lee Avenue. The concern is that westbound vehicles stopped at the traffic signal at Hutchins Street back up through the intersection of Lee Avenue (Exhibit A). These stopped vehicles restrict turning movements both into and out of Lee Avenue. The Police Department has expressed a similar concern.

Per the California Vehicle Code (CVC), it is illegal to block an intersection. CVC Section 22526 states that the driver of a vehicle shall not enter an intersection or marked crosswalk, notwithstanding any official traffic control signal to proceed, unless there is sufficient space on the other side of the intersection or marked crosswalk to accommodate the vehicle without obstructing through passage of vehicles from either side. Signs or markings are not required for this restriction to be enforceable.

The signing of this restriction is addressed in the State of California Department of Transportation sign policy. This policy indicates that the "Do Not Block Intersection" sign may be used in accordance with CVC 22526 at intersections that have demonstrated a gridlock problem. There is no pavement marking associated with this signing. The sign and corresponding policy is shown on Exhibit B. Gridlock is defined as the inability of traffic to move, due to congestion, even if the traffic control indicates that the drivers may proceed. "Keep Clear" signing and pavement marking, commonly mistaken for use at intersections, is for use only at driveways to emergency service facilities such as fire, police or ambulance. The only locations in the City where "Keep Clear" pavement markings have been installed are at the driveways servicing Fire stations. Since the intersection of Kettleman Lane at Lee Avenue is not a driveway to an emergency facility, this signing/markings would not be appropriate at this location, nor would Caltrans allow its installation.

A review of available accident records in the 5-year period from 1989 to 1993 indicates that there have been 20 accidents at the intersection of Kettleman Lane and Lee Avenue. Of these 20 accidents, 14 involved vehicles entering or exiting Lee Avenue. Nine of these accident reports state that traffic on Kettleman Lane provided an opening at Lee Avenue to allow cross-street traffic to proceed. In the remaining 5 accidents, although the report did not specifically state that an opening was left for cross-

APPROVED

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RECYCLED PAPER

street traffic, it was implied by the driver statements. Based on the information from the accident reports, it is safe to say that all or nearly all the accidents involving drivers entering or exiting Lee Avenue were related to the opening provided by drivers on Kettleman Lane. Similar accidents were reported at the driveway servicing the Beacon Service Station located west of Lee Avenue on Kettleman Lane. Traffic volumes approaching the intersection of Kettleman Lane and on Lee Avenue are 26,000 and 430 vehicles per day, respectively.

DISCUSSION: The Police Department's concern that the lack of signing or pavement markings makes enforcement difficult is valid. In addition to being difficult to enforce, the Police Department indicated that without signing only a parking citation could be issued. If signs are installed, the violation becomes a moving violation because the driver is now failing to obey an official traffic control device. Even though signing would change the violation to a moving violation, staff is reluctant to add the signing just for that reason. Staff's concern is that since the opening drivers on Kettleman Lane are occasionally providing for drivers on Lee Avenue is a factor in the accidents occurring at this intersection, stricter enforcement of this restriction would increase the frequency of these accidents. Controlling multiple lanes of traffic with this signing would be difficult and, as indicated in the accident reports, it cannot be assumed that all of the drivers will stop for vehicles who might use the opening. This is particularly true when all of the lanes of traffic are not backed up through Lee Avenue. An additional concern is that the sign is designated for use at intersections that have a demonstrated gridlock problem. Since gaps for Lee Avenue traffic generally appear after the Kettleman Lane traffic has cleared, this intersection does not conform to the definition of gridlock.

Since this request is on the State Highway, Caltrans was contacted for their comments. Caltrans indicated they would consider the "Do Not Block Intersection" signing (at the City's expense) but they would not support the installation of pavement markings. They also confirmed that "Keep Clear" signing and pavement marking is used only at driveways to emergency service facilities. While there are locations on some State Highways where "Keep Clear" pavement markings are being used contrary to policy, they are in the process of being phased out.

RECOMMENDATION: Based on the probable increase in accidents this intersection will experience if an opening on Kettleman Lane is enforced, and that the back-up experienced at this intersection is not consistent with the definition of gridlock, staff does not recommend the installation of "Do Not Block Intersection" signing at this location. If Council wishes to pursue the installation of this signing, Caltrans approval will be required.

FUNDING: Not applicable.

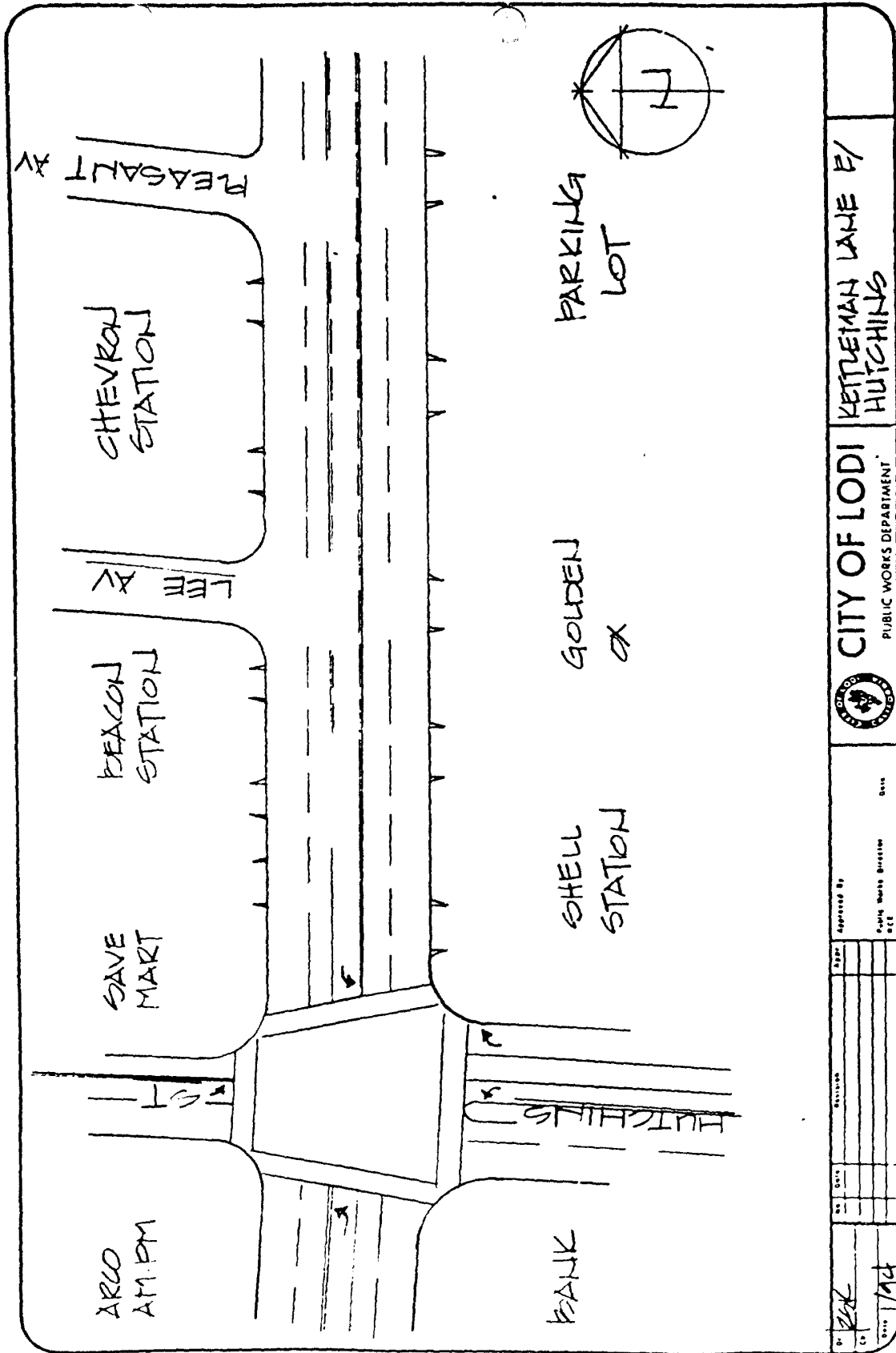

Jack L. Ronsko
Public Works Director

Prepared by Rick S. Kiri, Senior Engineering

JLR/RSK/im

Attachments

cc Police Chief
Street Superintendent
Associate Traffic Engineer



D- <u>PER</u> Co. <u>1/24</u>		Date 1/24	Approved By Public Works Director JCE	Date 1/24	 CITY OF LODI PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT	KETTERMAN LANE E/ HUTCHINS
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POLICY: R66

The DO NOT BLOCK INTERSECTION sign, (R66) may be used in accordance with CVC 22526, at intersections that have a demonstrated gridlock problem.

This sign may be installed by local authorities on State highways under encroachment permit.

